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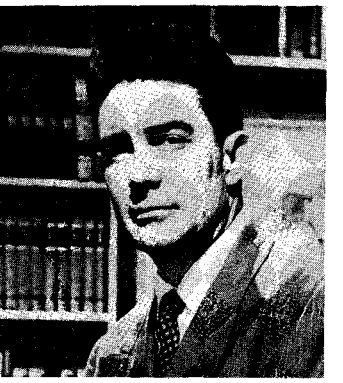

DAN SMOOT

LET'S GET ALONG WITH IT

In Philadelphia, on the closing day of the Constitutional Convention (Monday, September 17, 1787), Benjamin Franklin rose and gave his blessing to the Constitution, as written, saying:

"I doubt . . . whether any other convention we can obtain may be able to make a better Constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views . . . . It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does . . . ."(1)

Later that day, as the last members of the Convention were signing the Constitution, Franklin sat looking toward George Washington, presiding officer at the Convention. Behind Washington was a painting of the sun low on the horizon. Observing to James Madison that painters had difficulty in distinguishing clearly between a *rising* and a *setting* sun, Benjamin Franklin said:

"I have often . . . in the course of . . . [this] session . . . looked at that [picture] behind the president without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun."(1)

The wisdom, prejudice, passions, errors of opinion, local interests and selfish views which Franklin mentioned as inevitably coloring the political expressions of men, were never more evident than in the election of November 3, 1964.

For the first time in over thirty-five years, the American people, in 1964, had an opportunity to choose between totalitarian liberalism and constitutional conservatism. Since the choice concerned issues that millions did not clearly understand; and since many millions apparently made their choice for reasons that had nothing to do with political philosophies, it is heartening that more than 26 million Americans *did* vote for a constitutional conservative in 1964.

Almost before the polls closed in the United States on November 3, 1964, *Pravda* in the Soviet Union was gloating that President Johnson's victory was a "crushing defeat for the radical

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rightwing" in America. It was not. "Radical right-wing," as applied to American politics, has no specific meaning. Those who use the phrase generally mean it as a label for American constitutional conservatives. And American constitutional conservatives made a remarkable show of political strength in 1964.

Eight years ago, leading constitutional conservatives worked hard in the presidential election. With no hope of getting either major party to nominate a constitutional conservative, they made a forlorn third-party effort, selecting T. Coleman Andrews as presidential candidate. They got Andrews on the ballot in only 13 states. With little money and none of the press and broadcasting coverage afforded major-party candidates, constitutional conservatives polled fewer than half a million votes for their presidential candidate in 1956. In 1964, they polled more than 26 million. This reveals a great, thrilling (though still insufficient) awakening in eight years.

Let us not be deceived or discouraged by comparisons between Eisenhower's victories and Goldwater's defeat.

The victory of General Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, was *not* a demonstration of conservatism by the national electorate. To some, it was the rejection of an *old* regime whose vices had *long* been too evident. Of the 33 million people who voted for Eisenhower in 1952, the majority were not motivated by great concern for, or knowledge of, constitutional principles.

In 1960, John F. Kennedy, the winner, and Richard M. Nixon, the loser, each received more popular votes than Eisenhower received in 1952.

In 1952, Eisenhower received many "anti-Truman" votes, just as Johnson in 1964 received many "anti-Goldwater" votes. There was widespread "anti-Johnson" feeling in the United States this year, but apparently it produced few votes for Goldwater. My guess is that 95% of the voters who were "anti-Johnson" (for reasons other than an understanding of basic political philosophy) still voted for Johnson. Why?

No one can really answer this question. There were many forces motivating people who voted for Johnson in 1964.

Motivating Forces In The Election

THE ASSASSINATION. The assassination of President Kennedy had a profound emotional impact on the electorate in the 1964 elections. Though the late President had retained a high level of personal popularity, his legislative program was almost stalemated in Congress. The Kennedy foreign policy (though evoking praise from liberals who shared the views of people like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.) had the general population deeply troubled.

In October, 1962, there had been a momentary upsurge of confidence because of President Kennedy's firm words about the Cuban crisis; but, within a few weeks, anxiety about American foreign policy was more acute than ever before. What many for the moment had considered a strong confrontation began to look like a deal. The Kennedy administration had not blockaded Cuba or forced communists to remove armaments that imperiled the safety of our nation. The President had demanded on-site inspections to determine that missiles had been removed, but did not complain when his demand was ignored.

By late 1963, Americans were questioning our untenable foreign policy. After hundreds of millions of dollars given to Laos to make that nation an outpost against communism in Asia, why did our government take the lead in forcing anti-communists to accept a coalition government with communists and neutralists, thus virtually ordering capitulation of Laos to communist control?

Would our strange and uncertain role in Vietnam be a repetition of the Laos experience, or would it expand into something even worse: a re-run of the ghastly Korean tragedy?

In a period of 15 years, our government took from American taxpayers more than 100 billion

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dollars for gifts and loans and materials to foreign lands, ostensibly for the purpose of strengthening them against communism. Then, President Kennedy delivered two remarkable commencement speeches in 1963 — one at American University in Washington, one at the University of Maine. In both, the President's theme was that we must "re-examine our attitude towards the Soviet Union." Later in 1963, the public became dimly aware of something called the Phoenix Study, a report on disarmament prepared for the U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and distributed quietly to key personnel in government on July 18, 1963. The Phoenix Study recommended a policy of friendly togetherness, collaboration, and interdependence with the Soviet Union — to be encouraged by unilateral steps toward disarming the United States and by direct United States aid to help the Soviet Union catch up with us economically, industrially, and agriculturally. It was clear from President Kennedy's speeches that he was trying to implement recommendations of the Phoenix Study.

Why? The Soviets were still devoted to their constant objective of conquering the world. They had never kept any of their important commitments or promises to us. There was no evidence they had changed. If our governmental leaders had been even partially correct in telling us the Soviets were our deadly enemy, why were they now planning to treat the Soviets as friends?

These were *some* of the questions troubling Americans in November, 1963.

In short, when President Kennedy arrived in Dallas on the morning of November 22, 1963, he was facing an uncertain future. He was in deep political trouble. One hour after the presidential plane landed at Love Field, the world was in an agony of grief and confusion over the President's murder.

When Lyndon B. Johnson assumed the mantle of leadership he inherited, he also took up the robe of martyrdom which had fallen on President Kennedy.

From the afternoon of November 22, 1963, until the closing of the polls on November 3, 1964, President Johnson never let the people forget that he was trying to carry forward all the programs of the martyred young Kennedy. New frontier legislation which had hopelessly bogged down in Congress was reported out of committee and passed, under pressure from President Johnson who reminded the nation that this should be done as a tribute to our fallen President.

New frontier programs — domestic and foreign — which had crystallized more public and congressional resistance than any other presidential programs in this century suddenly became causes treated with reverence.

From the beginning to the end of the 1964 political year, the name of Kennedy was skillfully used to promote the cause of all liberal Democrats. Concurrently, memory of John F. Kennedy was relentlessly evoked to discredit critics of all programs, policies, parties, and politicians identified with the Kennedy-Johnson administration.

The gigantic emotional backwash of the assassination was a major force in shaping President Johnson's victory and Senator Goldwater's defeat in 1964.

WHITE HOUSE POWER. Regardless of other circumstances, a presidential candidate who is already President has a tremendous advantage. Everything the President does is reported to the world as interesting news. To whatever degree he pleases, the President can remain aloof from "partisan politics" and still (through the medium of press conferences and by the reporting of his daily activities) reach more millions with partisan political messages than his opponent can ever hope to reach. The President can — as Eisenhower did in 1956 and as Johnson did in 1964 — speak to the nation on some national or international "crisis." All networks are placed at his disposal, at no expense to him or his party. Newspapers give top priority to reporting what he says. The President speaks in grave tones, telling the people that danger exists, but reassuring them. They need not fear. Their government will protect them. Nothing could be more effective politically.

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These are some of the normal advantages that accrue to a President who is a candidate. If the President has a shrewd understanding of the power and prestige at his command, and a willingness to use them for his own political ends, he can multiply his advantages.

For example, President Johnson spoke in Augusta, Georgia, on October 26, 1964. He was interrupted by people chanting their opposition to him. After one interruption, the President said:

"I was in an election campaign four years ago and I returned to my home state in the last days of the campaign. We went to the hotel [in Dallas] to wash up before we went to a luncheon meeting. But the entrance was blocked and the hecklers were there, and they harassed us and they hounded us and they knocked my wife's hat off.

"And they spit at us, and they called us traitors, and they called us treason artists, and they had ugly signs and they dealt not in a single issue that we were debating.

"They had only to talk about personalities and little petty things because they were little petty people.

"And as we walked from one hotel to the other in a free American city . . . it took us more than an hour to walk across the block because of the chants and the saliva that was running out of their mouths — and, really, some of them were diseased, they were just really upset."[2]

The facts are that Mr. Johnson came to Dallas the day after a full-page political ad, released by Johnson's headquarters, ran in a Dallas paper, listing names of Dallas people who endorsed Johnson. On the list were the names of dead people and of conservatives strongly opposed to Johnson. A large crowd of Johnson supporters gathered in the hotel to greet him and Mrs. Johnson, and on the streets to cheer them as they walked from one hotel to another. Among the crowd, were some Dallas citizens opposed to Johnson. They waved signs calling attention to falsities in the political ad and called out taunting questions. It was a kind of political demonstration that has become commonplace in American political campaigns. It may be undignified, unnecessary, and ineffective; but it is conventional in American politics.

The gross distortion of this event would have been meaningless, or would have redounded to the speaker's discredit, if he had been merely speaking as Lyndon B. Johnson, candidate. But he was speaking as President of the United States. There is a halo of respectability and credibility, even of awe, about that office, regardless of the man who occupies it. There are many Americans who cannot believe that the *President* would deliberately misrepresent anything to the people.

The federal bureaucracy is an instrument of great power and prestige which can be used for the benefit of an incumbent President and his political party.

On June 30, 1964, there were 2,481,494 *federal* civilian employees, according to figures released by U. S. Senator Harry F. Byrd (Virginia Democrat).[3] In this connection, it should be remembered that federal grants-in-aid to state governments have made many state and local government jobs partly dependent upon federal programs.

In addition to government payrolls, we must consider the millions who receive money from government by other means — for welfare, special subsidy and aid programs, government purchases and so on. U. S. Representative Otto E. Passman (Louisiana Democrat) says that almost one out of every two adult Americans (48,119,576 is the estimated total) receives some type of government check regularly.[4]

This is not to insinuate that all government employees and all others receiving government checks vote for the President and party in power. But certain facts are obvious. Suppose word filters down from department heads in the federal agencies, and is passed on to 48,119,576 adult Americans throughout the land that their money from government may be eliminated or reduced if the President and his party lose an election. The political effect is bound to be great.

Indeed, a classic example of electioneering

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by withholding and threatening to withhold federal spending from a community occurred in Dallas.

Bruce Alger, elected as a Republican in 1954, became one of the finest constitutional conservatives in the U. S. Congress, and was reelected in 1956, 1958, 1960, and 1962. On November 7, 1958, *The Dallas Morning News* commented editorially on Alger's victory, in a year when Democrats swept liberal Republicans out of office all over the country. The *News* editorial said:

"The people of this country who believe in free enterprise, in the separation of powers between states and an all-powerful Federal Government, in the traditional right to carve a future of their own devising, have their backs to the wall.

"Unless they go to work in politics to reverse the trend to socialism, the America they once knew is gone.

"Victories by Alger in Dallas and by Conservative Republican Senator Goldwater of Arizona show how this country can be saved from imminent socialism.

"The answer is personal integrity, dedication to cause and work.

"Arrayed against Alger here were formidable forces — the brass-collar Democrats, Democrats dissatisfied with Eisenhower, organized labor, minorities — even part of Main Street.

"But he went to work. And in every congressional district in America there are sufficient numbers to win in the cause he espouses, if they will work. Alger proved it. Goldwater proved it.

"Time is short. The forces of conservatism in Washington are dwindling — men like Harry Byrd, Goldwater, Alger. The fewer they become, the more money the other side can spend to eliminate them.

"When they are gone, we all are gone. America will have become a European-type state — controlled, regulated, dictated to and finally enslaved."

On October 4, 1964, the *News* endorsed Earle Cabell, Alger's Democrat opponent, saying:

"The News recommends election of Mr. Cabell on Nov. 3 because it feels he can be more effective in Washington in representing the legitimate aspirations of Dallas County and in advancing the cause of sound governmental philosophy and politics.

"The News is mindful of Mr. Alger's fidelity to political conservatism and editorially has praised him in that respect. But in recent years his effectiveness has declined appreciably . . . ."

Bruce Alger has not changed since 1958; and, begging the *News's* pardon, the longer he stayed in Congress the more effective he became. What had changed?

Following the election of 1958, it was a widely circulated and generally credited rumor in Dallas that Lyndon B. Johnson (then majority leader of the Senate) and Sam Rayburn (then Speaker of the House) had sent down word and given orders to leading Dallas businessmen. LBJ and Mr. Sam were tired of Dallas businessmen seeking federal "benefits" for Dallas, while Dallas continued to elect a conservative Republican to the House. Dallas would suffer if it did not get rid of Bruce Alger.

Anon, threats became reality. A long-planned Federal Center for Dallas was cancelled. The Veterans Administration Headquarters (for many years a major government facility in Dallas) was moved to Waco. Other offices were moved to Fort Worth. It was widely believed locally that the Federal Aviation Agency's apparent partiality for Fort Worth (in the Fort Worth-Dallas squabble over airports) resulted from Washington's resentment of Bruce Alger. Bruce Alger was largely responsible for stopping a federal urban renewal project — which would have done Dallas no good but would have been a great windfall for some prosperous real estate owners and promoters.

In 1964, both Dallas newspapers led an all-out campaign against Bruce Alger. The group which the *News* had referred to in 1958 as "Main Street" — businessmen who yearn for more federal spending in Dallas — was solidly against Bruce Alger in 1964. This year, Alger lost to Democrat Earle Cabell, once a conservative, but now energetically supporting the whole socialistic program of the Johnson administration.

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FEAR, CONFUSION, RESIGNATION. In Boston, a cab driver spoke bitterly to me about the "racial question" and lambasted the Democrats for stirring minority groups to violence. When he learned I was from Dallas, his voice chilled and he said: "That's a dirty word around here." After I recovered from that, and asked him who he thought would win the election, he said:

"Johnson, of course. He doesn't seem to do much except eat barbecue on that ranch of his in Texas. He sure made a lot of money while he was in the Senate, on that TV station and so on; and in my book that doesn't add up to anything right. I sure don't like what he and his party are doing to the country, and I know it will get worse after he's elected. But I'd rather take anything he can dish out than be blown to bits by an atom bomb, and that's what would happen to us if Goldwater got in. All of us around here feel that way about it."

A cab driver in Los Angeles said:

"I don't trust politicians. In California, most of them are rotten. So I side with the ones that won't hurt me. I'm a union man, and the unions are scared of Goldwater. He'd wreck the unions. Johnson doesn't sound too smart, but at least he's not against the unions, and I think he ought to have a chance."

A housewife in Texas said:

"I don't like Johnson, but I *have* to vote for him. My husband's job's at stake. All the men have been told that if Johnson isn't elected, their company's government contracts won't be renewed. We *have* to vote for him!"

A gas station attendant in Louisiana:

"He [Johnson] won't carry this state. But I haven't decided yet. If he loses in Louisiana, this state is dead for the next four years. He'll see to that."

A little old lady who threw apples at the Goldwater campaign train, screamed:

"If you're elected, I'll starve!"

A newspaper reporter in Texas said:

"My paper won't oppose Johnson, because they think he will win. And if he does — well, we supported his opponent in the 1948 Senate campaign. Then during the Korean War there was a paper shortage. The newspapers in Texas who supported Johnson got all the paper they wanted. But not *this* newspaper; it was pretty rough!"

A young woman who said she was glad she had not been in Dallas long enough to vote this year explained:

"I'm not sure I would bother even if I could vote. The columnists and pollsters have concentrated on defeating Goldwater for months. If you repeat a lie often enough, a great number of people will believe it. I don't think he has a chance. Leaders in his own party have tried to humiliate him, even though he has worked harder for the Republicans than any other man I can remember.

"With these odds against him, he can't make it. Why should I bother to cast a vote that won't be enough to help Goldwater — but will just raise the total for the Republican party for which I have lost respect!"

We Have A Job To Do

In October, 1964, Lyndon Johnson said in a campaign speech in Butte, Montana:

"I predict, if I am elected, that the extreme groups that have infected this country — the spotlight of publicity will be put on them and the Klan and the Birch Society and those others who preach hate will have their robes pulled open where the American people can see them."[5]

Since Barry Goldwater was frequently labeled an "extremist" who was supported only by bigots and racists, it now seems obvious that the United States is "infected" with 26 million voters whom the President (with the help of Arthur Larson, the ADA, and others capable of the effort) plans to spotlight and disrobe to public attention.

This will be a formidable task even for President Johnson, and the government-front organizations who will aid him in fulfilling his prediction. In January, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson will take his *second* oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States — a Constitution which at least 26 million Americans are determined to preserve.

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Surely, Mr. Johnson does not deceive himself: many of the 40 million Americans who voted for him have no confidence in his leadership or in the principles of the Democrat Party. Yet there are *more* than 26 million Americans who (in the face of all threats) were willing to place the fate of their nation in the hands of Barry Goldwater.

Those conservatives who heard Senator Goldwater's brief concession speech on November 4, were heartened by his calm resolve and statesmanship in the face of what had been described as "humiliating defeat." Barry Goldwater said:

"It is not an effort we can drop now; nor do we have any intention of dropping it . . . we have a job to do, and let's get along with it."

Who can sum it up better?

Between 1956 and 1964, the number of voters casting ballots for a restoration of constitutional freedom increased to 26 million. We can more than double that number in the next four years.

A great number of Goldwater's supporters were young people, not worn by years of defeat. Youth, zealous in a noble cause, will not quit.

If old Ben Franklin were looking at the horizon today, he might conclude that it is a setting, not a rising, sun. It may set for a time. But it will rise again.

We have a job to do. Let's get along with it.

FOOTNOTES

(1) *Benjamin Franklin*, by Carl Van Doren, The Viking Press, New York City, 1938, pp. 753-5

(2) UPI story from Augusta, Ga., *The Dallas Times Herald*, October 27, 1964, p. 3A

(3) *Congressional Record*, August 31, 1964, p.20397 (daily)

(4) Text of speech by U. S. Representative Otto E. Passman (Dem., La.) at the Annual Convention of the Louisiana Wholesale Grocers Association, Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 8, 1964, p. 15

(5) UPI story by Frank Cormier, *The Dallas Times Herald*, October 13, 1964, pp. 1A, 13A

WHO IS DAN SMOOT?

Born in Missouri, reared in Texas, Dan Smoot went to SMU getting BA and MA degrees, 1938 and 1940. In 1941, he joined the faculty at Harvard as a Teaching Fellow, doing graduate work for a doctorate in American civilization. From 1942 to 1951, he was an FBI agent: three and a half years on communist investigations; two years on FBI headquarters staff; almost four years on general FBI cases in various places. He resigned from the FBI and, from 1951 to 1955, was commentator on national radio and television programs, giving *both* sides of controversial issues. In July, 1955, he started his present profit-supported, free-enterprise business: publishing *The Dan Smoot Report*, a weekly magazine available by subscription; and producing a weekly news-analysis radio and television broadcast, available for sponsorship by reputable business firms, as an advertising vehicle. The *Report* and broadcast give *one* side of important issues: the side that presents documented truth using the American Constitution as a yardstick. If you think Smoot's materials are effective against socialism and communism, you can help immensely—help get subcribers for the *Report*, commercial sponsors for the broadcast.

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